

## Crafters' Corner - Articles & Tips

### Brushstroke Bonanza Part 3

by Bill Thompson



I hope that by now you have had time to practice the brushstrokes described in the first article of this series (see [Brushstroke Bonanza Part 1](#)). If so, here is a brushstroke project that you might paint with press-and-pull-type brushstrokes, using whatever medium you most enjoy—underglaze colors, translucent underglaze colors, underglaze colors for bisque, nonfiring stains, or china paints.

Only 2 brushes are required, a sable or synthetic round and a liner. The size of the round brush you choose will determine the size of the finished design. The design is easy enough to paint freehand, but if you are a bit hesitant, make a copy of the pattern and

trace it onto the selected piece. Enlarge the design to suit the size of the brush you wish to use or choose a brush to suit the size of the design. If you use a #10 round brush, the design can be fairly large, perhaps about 8" wide and 7" high, a #6 brush for a design about 6" by 5", etc., etc. A #2 liner will suffice for any size design.

Paint on greenware with regular underglaze, on bisque with translucent underglaze colors, underglaze colors for bisque, and nonfiring stains, and on porcelain bisque or china with china paints. It may be necessary with some mediums to go over the brushstrokes more than once to achieve the desired depth of color, but you will find that very easy to do.

So, without further ado, let's pick up a brush and paint this distelfink-type bird! I painted the original design with some acrylic paints that were at hand on a covered palette, but you use whatever colors you wish for the design you paint. Refer to the following suggestions only as a guide, adding your own personal touches to the design. For instance: when you finish the bird and foliage, you might wish to add some brushstroke flowers with strokes or dots, and to detail the design in some other way.

#### What You'll Need:

- Suitable piece of greenware, bisque, porcelain bisque, or china.
  - Printout of **the design**.
  - Clay carbon paper or graphite paper if tracing the design.
  - Brushes - A sable or synthetic round and a liner of the sizes suited to the design.
  - Colors in the medium of your choice.
  - Glaze or spray sealer as required.



Fully load the brush and paint several overlapping strokes on the head. Start at the back of the neck and pull the strokes toward the beak. To paint the breast, begin about halfway down the body and pull strokes up toward the throat. Make each stroke a bit shorter than the previous one to make them all fit the breast area. Finish the body by starting at the center point and pull the strokes toward the bird's

tail. Use a darker color and apply some shorter strokes over the same area. Fill in the wing in the same way, pulling some strokes from the shoulder and some from the midway point toward the tail tip. Leave a small unpainted area in the center of the wing. Add the tail with 3 long, straight strokes. Fill in the beak with a small stroke of color.

For the foliage strokes, load the brush with one color, then pull the side of it through another color on the palette to achieve a shaded effect. Depending on the piece you are painting, you may wish to add some foliage strokes as fill-ins to make a more complete and harmonious design.

For the final touches, load the liner brush with a dark color (I use a mixture of Dark Blue and Brown). Partially outline the bird and add some detail strokes to the wings and tail as desired. Use the same brush and a darker foliage color to detail the foliage and to add the branch and curliques. Paint the legs with a suitable color.

Use the round brush to dot the eye with the dark outlining color and to add some dots of a contrasting color to the bird's breast.

Finish the piece, firing, glazing, or spraying depending on the medium used.

Editor's Note: If you have painting questions that have been plaguing you or have some painting technique that has been giving you trouble, drop us a line.

Please direct questions to:

**Editor, Ceramic Arts & Crafts,**  
c/o Scott Publications,  
30595 Eight Mile,  
Livonia, MI 48152-1798